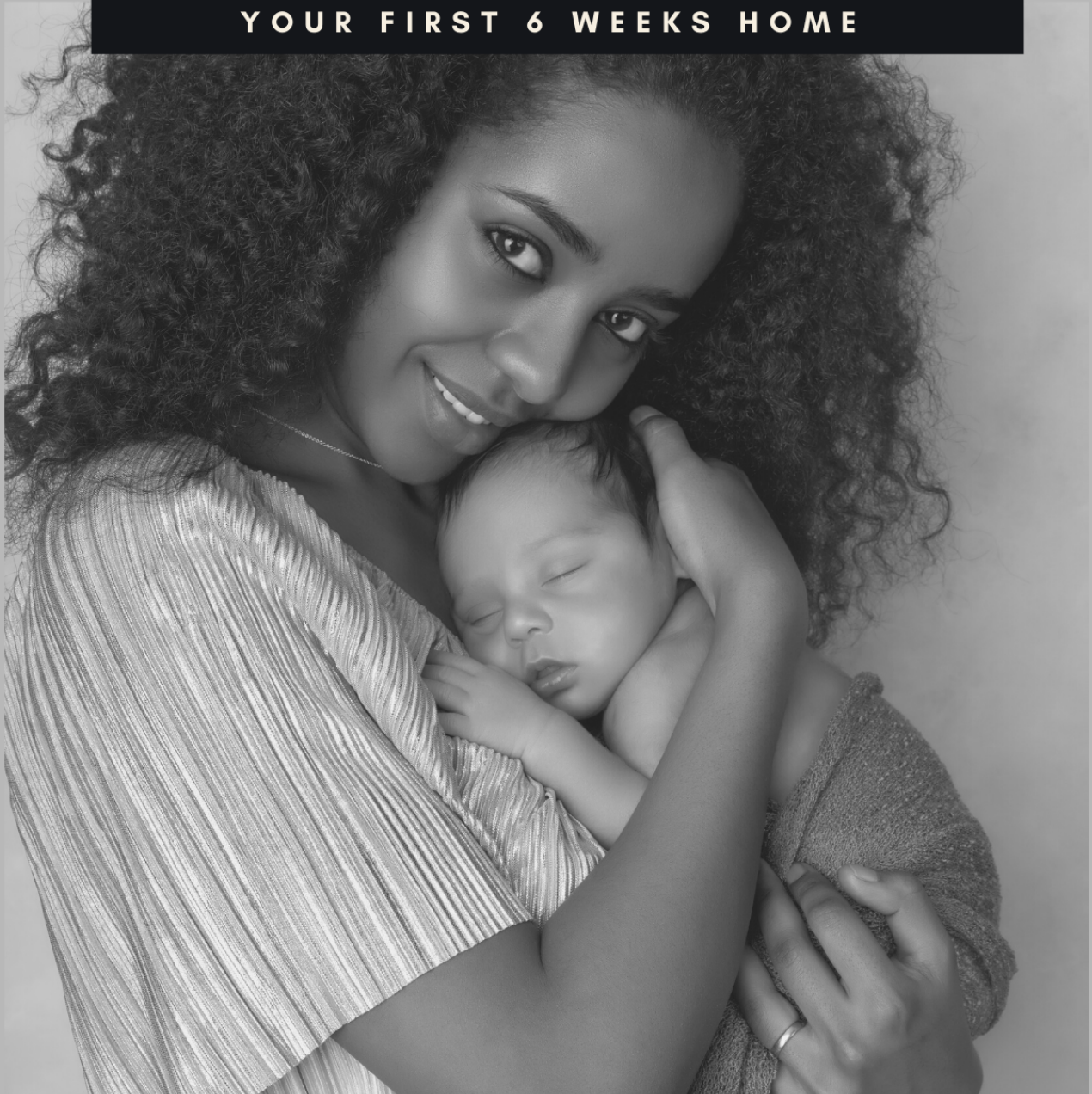


REVELLE

PHYSICAL THERAPY

Recover

A GUIDE TO GETTING READY FOR
YOUR FIRST 6 WEEKS HOME



The ultimate guide to healing after baby!



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*Topics included in our
FULL guide*

REVELLE

PHYSICAL THERAPY

ABOUT US

Hi, we are Kelley and Amy! Neighbors, turned best friends, turned co-owners of Revelle!

The Revelle “love story” began 8 years ago when we became next-door neighbors. A friendship quickly blossomed and over the next few years, this friendship became a source of strength and support through some of life’s most significant milestones, including pregnancy and the beginning of motherhood.



After the birth of our first babies, we bonded even more over our own personal postpartum struggles and how they had initially affected our marriages, friendships and self-worth. We both expressed our passion for wanting to educate other women that these common postpartum issues are actually treatable and women should not accept them as normal. However, we knew how hard it was to find the time to seek self-care. This was the essential element that inspired us to develop Revelle Physical Therapy.

Amy is married with two sassy daughters and lives in Atlanta, GA. She has been a Doctor of Physical Therapy for 10 years and has her Manual Therapy Certification. She specializes in the combination of manual therapy, orthopedics and women's health.

Kelley is married with two rambunctious boys, identical twins girls and resides in Denver, CO. She has been a Doctor of Physical Therapy for 13 years and was awarded her Orthopedic Certified Specialty in 2008. She, too, specializes in the combination of manual therapy, orthopedics and women's health.

Our mission is for ALL women to feel empowered and supported throughout every phase of pregnancy and postpartum! We strive to REVELLEUTIONIZE the care women receive throughout these important and sacred times.

Congratulations!!!

Baby is here and the hard part is over, right!?! Well, not necessarily!

Recovering from labor and delivery is no joke and unfortunately, the many details about the recovery process just aren't talked about enough!

This information is designed to educate and guide you through the next 6 weeks so you feel empowered and supported! Remember this is only a guide!

This is not intended to diagnose, treat or take the place of a physical exam by your OBGYN or Pelvic Health Professional.



As you read through the guide, if you have any questions at all, don't hesitate to reach out to us via email: info@therevelle.com. We are here to help you feel supported and confident throughout this early recovery process.

Discharge/Bleeding

WHY DO WE BLEED AFTER BABY?

- This is known in our world as lochia so if you hear this term just know its fancy for bleeding/discharge postpartum.
- Your body is releasing extra fluids, blood, and other tissues from your pregnancy, and you are also healing where your placenta detached from your uterus!

NORMAL STAGES (THESE ARE JUST APPROXIMATIONS!)

Day 1-3: Like a “heavy flow” bloody, small/medium clots

Day 4-10: This will look brown and pink, with a bit more discharge than blood, and fewer clots will be present

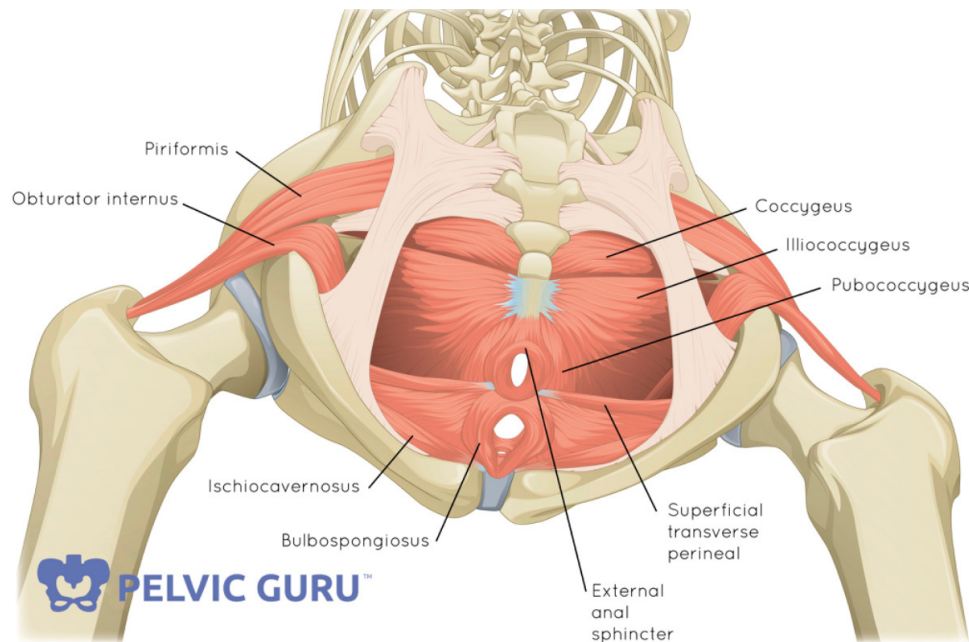
Day 10-28: Whitish yellow discharge little or no blood and no clots

- There are normal fluctuations within these stages. Any time activity level increases, there can be an increase in bleeding (maybe a signal that you’ve done too much and a good reminder to slow down)
- Around day 10-14, there may be a sudden increase in fresh blood when the scabbing from the uterus falls off. This should be a one-time thing that does not require more than one pad, though.

Your Pelvic Floor

WHAT IS IT?

A group of muscles that sling front to back from your pubic bone to your tailbone, and side to side from both sit bones.



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

These muscles support the bladder, uterus, and colon. The urethra, vagina, and rectum all pass through these muscles. They help control your bowel and bladder. They also help with sexual function and are part of your deep core system!

HOW IS IT AFFECTED FROM LABOR AND DELIVERY?

These muscles go through a lot of trauma during labor and delivery, especially if you had TEARING or an episiotomy. But not only that! During pregnancy, these muscles get stressed and stretched and don't function as well as usual. It is vital that we care for these muscles after baby arrives to ensure they are functioning at their best!

Perineal Tears

CLASSIFICATIONS

1. **First degree**: Small tears that affect the skin only; can occur around the labia, clitoris or inside the vagina; usually heal quickly and do not require intervention.
2. **Second degree**: Tears that affect the muscle and skin; usually require stitches immediately after delivery.
3. **Third degree**: Tears that affect the perineal muscles and external anal sphincter; requires repair immediately after delivery to help address the muscles affected.
4. **Fourth degree**: Tears that affect the perineal muscles, external anal sphincter and rectal mucosa; requires repair immediately after delivery to help address the anatomy affected.

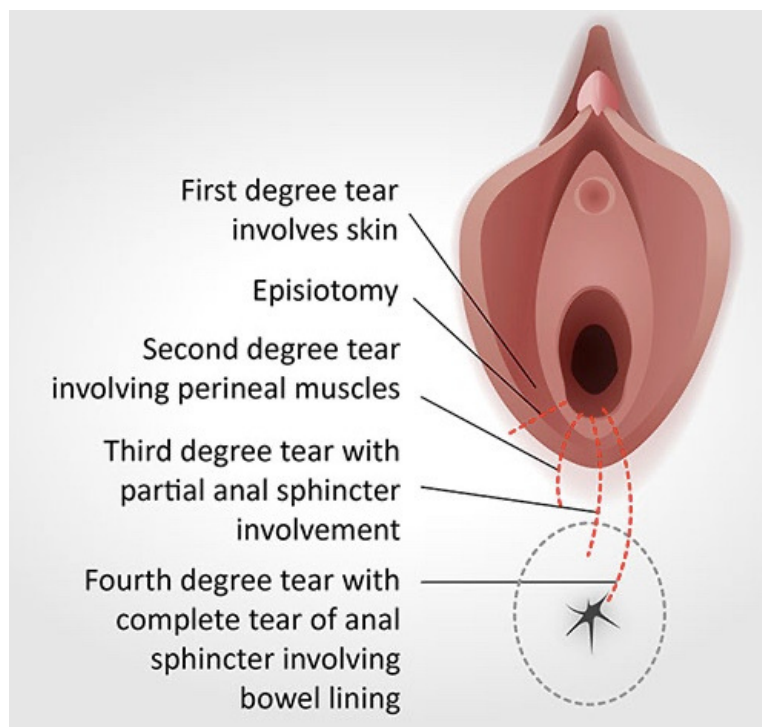


IMAGE FROM: WWW.RCOG.ORG.UK

Management of Your Perineum

Supplies to have on hand:

- Perineal irrigation bottle
- Ice packs
- Perineal pain spray/witch hazel
- Pads
- Disposable undies



- Regardless of c-section or vaginal birth, this area will be sensitive.
- Keep good hygiene: Wash your hands before and after going to the bathroom or changing your pads; wash or shower at least once a day and change your sanitary pads regularly.
- Going to the bathroom will take A LOT more time in the first 1-3 weeks! Give yourself the extra time and space you need to perform your routine-this is imperative in your postpartum healing.
- After you pee and/or poo use the peri bottle to rinse (like your own personal bidet). Then, pat dry, apply some perineal foam/spray to the area as needed.
- You want to be mindful when wiping if you have stitches. We often recommend getting nonstick foam squares and placing the spray/foam on them and then place them between your pad and perineum. (FEELS SO GOOD!)
- Ice and more ice! Yes on your Perineum! We recommend 10-15 minutes, with a barrier, multiple times a day! This is important for several reasons:
 1. It acts as an anti-inflammatory
 2. Minimizes sensation of pain
 3. Decreases swelling

Hemorrhoids

WHAT THE HECK ARE THEY!?

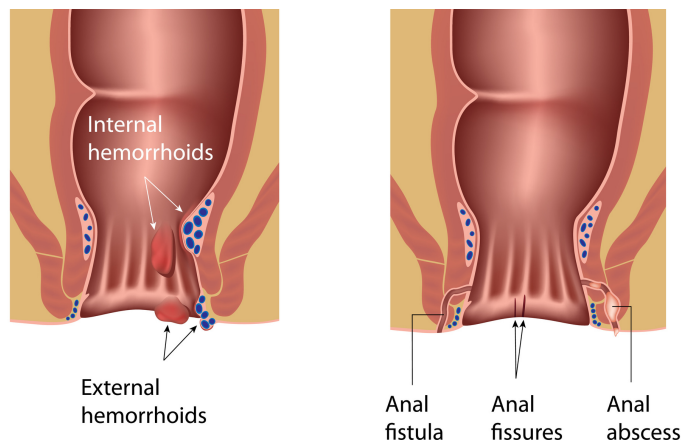
Hemorrhoids are swollen veins in the lower rectum and anus that can be either internal, external or both. Symptoms include:

- Pain or discomfort around the anus, especially with sitting
- Rectal itching
- Bleeding
- Lump or swelling near the anus
- Painful bowel movements:
- Not to be confused with an anal fissure which is tearing of skin of the anus. These usually have more severe pain associated and looks like a paper cut or tear at the anus.

Hemorrhoids are caused by an increase in pressure in the lower rectum, commonly seen during and/or after pregnancy due to several reasons, including:

- Increased stress on the perineum from:
 - weight of baby
 - increased size of uterus
 - significant increase in blood volume/fluids
 - pushing phase of labor
 - inadequate intra abdominal pressure management
- The increase in production of the hormone progesterone which causes veins to relax
- Constipation and poor poo habits!!!

[HTTPS://ALBANYGI.COM/PATIENT-EDUCATION/ANAL-FISSURE](https://albanygi.com/patient-education/anal-fissure)



Exercise Time

- We know many of you are eager to start exercising but this is extremely important: **do not rush things!** We see too many mamas that returned back to their normal exercise routine too quickly, without guidance, and now they are dealing with dysfunctions that could have been avoided!
- REMEMBER: Everyone heals differently! If you need a few extra weeks to let your body recover physically and mentally, that's okay!! Everyone is different and we urge you to honor your mind and body!



- Do NOT skip your postpartum visit with your provider! Yes, many times the visit is very basic, but it is important for you to be examined and get cleared prior to returning to exercise.
- We urge everyone to get an assessment from a pelvic floor physical therapist; the following exercises do not replace that! This is just a guide to help get you started on your recovery journey!
- The following exercises are basic ways to get your body moving and start rehabilitating your body. If you are looking for more specific instruction, demonstration and guidance, we highly recommend The Bloom Method, which covers pregnancy, the fourth trimester and beyond!

Check them out here: <https://thebloommethode.com>

Exercise Time

WEEKS 1-3

- **DIAPHRAGMATIC BREATHING**

Hooklying: Lie down on your back with your knees bent and feet rested on floor. Place one hand on your chest, other on belly. Take a deep breath in and try to feel belly rise before chest. Imagine your ribs expanding 360 degrees, like an umbrella opening up. Perform 10x daily.



- **TRANSVERSE ABDOMINIS CONTRACTIONS**

Hooklying: Lie down on your back with your knees bent and feet rested on floor. Place hands just inside hip bones. take a deep breath in and as you exhale, try to engage your deep core muscle, aka the transverse abdominis. Imagine your two hip bones gently pulling together. Try to hold this contraction 3 seconds, then relax. Perform 10x daily.



Exercise Time

WEEKS 1-3

- **PELVIC FLOOR MUSCLE CONTRACTIONS (AKA KEGELS)**

Elevated bridge: Start lying on your back, with knees bent and hips elevated up on a few pillows. Take a deep breath in and as you exhale, attempt a pelvic floor contraction. As you contract these muscles, imagine your vagina sucking a smoothie up through a straw. It should feel like a close and a lift! You may also feel your low abdominal muscles contract; this is a good sign you are doing it correctly! Hold contraction 1-3 seconds, and then fully relax. Imagine pelvic floor slowly releasing back down to starting position. Perform 10x daily.



Walking Program

Here is a walking program to get you started! This program is allowed to vary and it is important to listen to your body!

Didn't have a great week? Baby got ya up all night? That's okay mama! Repeat a week as needed! This is only a guideline and meant to be modified as much or as little as you need!

If at any point in time your pain intensifies or you are experiencing excessive muscle soreness, increased vaginal heaviness, or c-section scar discomfort, then make modifications or rest. If any of these symptoms persist, then it is best to call your healthcare provider.



Have questions? Don't hesitate to reach out to us at:

info@therevelle.com

Walking Program

Week 1:	Walk 5-8 minutes	2x/day, daily
Week 2:	Walk 10 minutes	2x/day, daily
Week 3:	Walk 15 minutes Walk 15 + 5 minute brisk walk	1-2x/day, 4x/week 1x/day, 3x/week
Week 4:	Walk 20 minutes Walk 20 + 5 minute brisk	1-2x/day, 4x/week 1x/day, 3x/week
Week 5:	Walk 20 + 5 min brisk Walk 30 minutes Walk 20 + 5 minute brisk Walk 30 minutes Walk 20+5 minute brisk Walk 30 minutes Walk 30 minutes	Day 1 Day 2 Day 3 Day 4 Day 5 Day 6 Day 7
Week 6:	Yay! You have reached 6 weeks!	

Now is the time to really assess how you are feeling before progressing on to more intense types of exercise.

We HIGHLY recommend first being assessed by your OBGYN/Midwife at your scheduled 6 week postpartum visit and then have your pelvic floor assessed by a pelvic floor physical therapist. Your PT will be able to ensure you are ready to progress your exercise regimen, such as going from walking to running and/or adding in a strengthening program!

Pelvic Floor Physical Therapy

WHEN SHOULD I SEE A PELVIC FLOOR PHYSICAL THERAPIST?

We encourage you to read through the questions below; do you answer yes to any of them? If so, it is likely you are dealing with a pelvic floor dysfunction that should be addressed, especially prior to returning back to exercise!



- Are you experiencing heaviness, pulling or pressure in your pelvis?
- Are there times when you feel like you are sitting on a small ball or feel like something is falling out of your vagina? Do you sometimes notice a bulge of tissue coming out of the opening of your vagina?
- Do you notice coning, doming or a bulge in your abdomen when you contract your abdominal muscles (ie: sitting up from lying down or lifting)?
- Are you experiencing low back pain, especially when lifting things around the house?
- Are you experiencing pain, burning, and/or discomfort with sex?
- If fully healed, is your C-section scar sensitive, uncomfortable or painful to touch?
- Are you having pain and/or burning with urination?
- Are you leaking urine when you cough, sneeze, laugh or lift something heavy? What about when you run or jump?
- Do you feel like you are having to urinate more frequently than normal?

Have questions? Don't hesitate to reach out to us at:

info@therevelle.com

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